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the regions of most distinct vision, called *macular* regions, and the depressions within their boundaries, called *foveæ* (singular, *fovea*), vary in position in different birds. In hawks, eagles, kingfishers, and insectivorous birds, which have the eyes placed upon the sides of the head so as to increase the size of the field of vision, two macular regions, and generally two foveæ, are found in the fundus of *each* eye. Dr. Wood infers from this that such birds have stereoscopic, or binocular vision in each eye, and accounts for their wonderful powers of fixation in this way. It is to be doubted whether this inference is correct. Binocular vision requires the production of *two similar images*. How could two images be formed in the same eye with only one lens?

That peculiar organ, the pecten or marsupium, comes in for a share of the discussion. This body is possessed by every bird. It stretches out from the ocular fundus into the vitreous humour almost to the lens. The form and complexity of the pecten vary much in different species. Its function may be to assist in pushing the crystalline lens forward during accommodative efforts, and it may also have something to do with the nourishing of the non-vascular structures within the eyeball.

Dr. Wood asserts that the background of the eye furnishes certain data of value in classification, since "wild species present invariable ophthalmoscopic pictures." On the whole the paper is very readable and well worth consideration.—WALTER P. TAYLOR.

THE BIRDS OF THE CHICAGO AREA, by FRANK M. WOODRUFF, is a bulletin which, in many respects, is a model of what a local list should be. It contains a full description of the territory included in the Chicago area, its climatic influences, and localities of interest; the latter of special interest to not only local but visiting ornithologists.

Many of the conditions opposed to birds are well brought out and one can well comprehend why many species once so plentiful about the head of the lake are now rarely seen.

A dozen full-page half-tones illustrate in a striking manner the more prominent features of the topography. The "List" itself contains 316 species and subspecies, and shows a great amount of careful research. It includes, besides the scientific and common names, all the synonyms, both popular and scientific.

One thing, however, is painfully evident and that is the very small amount of information regarding our birds which has been obtained during the past fifteen years. Mr. Woodruff has been indefatigable in his investigations,

but aside from an occasional record by one of the few ornithologists of this locality he has confined himself almost entirely to his own personal observations. This fact, and because of the size of the area, some parts of which were visited only at intervals of many years, makes the records scattering and often twenty years apart. To overcome this dearth of notes, Nelson's "Birds of Northeastern Illinois" has been quoted so frequently as to make the list, at times, seem more of a compilation than a record of up-to-date observations. Of about fifty birds listed there is nothing noted since 1876. It is therefore evident that many of these species should either be placed in a hypothetical list or else something more recent than a record of thirty-one years standing discovered in regard to them.

It is, however, fortunate for Chicago ornithology that there is one man among its two million inhabitants who has not succumbed entirely to the spirit of commercialism which prevades the Chicago area, and that he has had the courage to put in the shape of a list the results of twenty-five years labor.

Nelson 1876, Ridgway 1889 and 1895, and Woodruff in 1906, are all epoch making periods and we can only express regret that such long intervals elapse between them.

A bibliography, and an index of both scientific and common names, complete a very commendable effort.—F. S. D.

STATE OF NEW YORK; FOREST, FISH AND GAME COMMISSION; 1902-1903, 8th and 9th Reports; Royal 8 vo., pages 456; half tones 156, 38 in color, 20 of them birds.—This is one of the most handsome state reports of its nature ever gotten up; and in the fullness of the ground gone over, the forest and game articles will prove instructive as well as interesting reading. There are two ornithological papers, dealing with "Birds as Conservators of the Forest" and "The Wild Fowls of the St. Lawrence River." The former article is by Dr. F. E. L. Beal, the expert bird-food authority. New York has chosen well a man to show them the beneficial office of birds as destroyers of forest insect pests.

Dr. Beal opens his paper with an account of "Birds that Destroy Insects": how their busy lives are spent in hunting down the hoards of noxious insects that are daily attacking the forest trees. He mentions how some insects are supposed to be protected by their color, smell or taste; but stomach examination proves otherwise as to the keen senses and sharp appetites of their feathered enemies. In many cases where species of insects had strong odors and rank taste which were thought to protect them, these very species were found to form a very important percentage of the birds' food, often eaten to a varying extent by nearly all

1 The Chicago Academy of Sciences | — | The Birds of the Chicago Area | by | Frank Morley Woodruff | — | Bulletin No. VI | of | The Natural History Survey | — | Issued April 15, 1907; pp. 1 222, frontispiece, plates I-XI, all half-tones.